

July 12, 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL CONTRACTING OFFICERS AND NEGOTIATORS

TO: DISTRIBUTION LIST FAC

FROM: M/OP, Mark S. Ward, Director

SUBJECT: Posting USAID Solicitations and other Acquisition & Assistance (A&A) documents on the Business & Procurement Internet Site

CONTRACT INFORMATION BULLETIN 01 - 13

This CIB supersedes and cancels CIB 97-14.

In an effort to make notices and solicitations concerning worldwide business opportunities with USAID more readily available, the Office of Procurement began posting solicitation and related documents on the USAID Business & Procurement Internet site in 1995. This site has been extremely successful and well received by the public as well as the rest of the Agency. In fact, the availability of this information in electronic format has drastically decreased the volume of requests for hard copies of the documents.

The purposes of this CIB are to:

- (1) Update, clarify and/or expand A&A Internet posting guidance.
- (2) Incorporate comments that have been received from the user community.
- (3) Provide formatting instructions to ensure that all A&A documents posted to the USAID Website are compliant with the NEW requirements in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998.

- (4) Incorporate a **NEW** requirement to "flag" CBD Notices that are announcing capital projects or equipment in excess of \$2.5 million. For these purposes, capital projects include architectural and engineering design studies, construction of the physical infrastructure, and operations and maintenance of the facility. Capital equipment includes for example, generators, telecommunication equipment, machinery, etc. When capital equipment or capital projects represents only a component of a larger activity, the \$2.5M ceiling applies only to that portion of the work which is capital equipment/projects - not the estimated amount of the entire award.

It is anticipated that all of the guidance in this CIB will be incorporated into new or existing ADS chapters as soon as possible. Please note that the Office of Procurement Internet Coordinator (OPIC) mentioned throughout the CIB is not an A&A subject matter expert and does not review for content. However, s/he has been tasked by M/OP management to perform certain functions related to the posting of materials - primarily associated with process. In general, the functions s/he performs relate to issues of consistency and compliance with important Agency policy/regulations that are best addressed at the stage of posting various A&A documents.

Following is a listing of items that will or may be posted to the Internet site. Mandatory postings are indicated as such. Please note that a designation of **MANDATORY** does not mean the document is mandatory in any given A&A process, but that **posting** it on the Internet is mandatory whenever you create such a document except as annotated in the footnotes. Where any other regulation or special authority (e.g., HIV/AIDS) provides for other avenues for advertising and/or posting or solicitations, those regulations supercede the "mandatory" nature of the requirements herein.

PRE-SOLICITATION DOCUMENTS

- (1) Pre-solicitation Notices:

- (a) **All Commerce Business Daily (CBD) Notices** (e.g., pre-solicitation notices, Notices of Intent to Sole-Source, Sources Sought Synopses, Requests for Expressions of Interest). Contracting Officers are responsible for including the appropriate Internet related text (see

Attachment 1) in each CBD Notice. Posting CBD Notices to the Internet does not take the place of sending the same notice to the e-mail address: **CBD Mailbox**. M/OP/PS is responsible for sending notices sent to CBD Mailbox to the CBD for publication. Questions pertaining to the CBD publications may be directed to Ms. Delaina Vines (202/712-5479) in M/OP/PS/SUP. **(MANDATORY)** *We expect the CBD process as described above to change when the Final Rule regarding FedBizOps.gov is effective in Fall 2001. When it does change, we will issue an amendment to this CIB. In the interim, these are the instructions you need to follow for CBD Notices.* **NEW:** With each CBD submittal, you must indicate in your e-mail to the OP Internet Coordinator (OPIC) whether or not your notice is for a capital project, capital equipment or commodity procurement in excess of \$2.5 Million. When capital equipment or capital projects represents only a component of a larger activity, the \$2.5M ceiling applies only to that portion of the work which is capital equipment/projects - not the estimated amount of the entire award.

(b) **(NEW!) Other pre-solicitation notices that are in the format provided in Attachment 2 to this Notice.** In response to your requests, we have created a section for non-CBD pre-solicitation notices. Pre-solicitation notices received for posting that are not in the format found in Attachment 2 will not be posted. We are requiring the use of a standardized format in order to provide consistency to the users of the Internet site.

(2) (NEW!) Draft Statements of Work (SOWs) and Draft Program Descriptions: You may submit these documents to the OP Internet Coordinator for posting provided that you identify the names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of two points of contact at the top of the document. You should also clearly articulate specific instructions regarding submission of comments (e.g., deadlines, format, etc), as no one in USAID/W will be able to respond to questions of this nature on your behalf. Additionally, you must present evidence that the cognizant Contracting Officer for the upcoming action has cleared on the content of the draft as well as the release date of the draft. An e-mail from the Contracting Officer will be sufficient to indicate clearance.

SOLICITATION DOCUMENTS

Keep in mind that while posting solicitations to the Internet is the preferred method of distribution; you must also be responsive to, and timely in, honoring the requests of potential offerors for hard copies, via e-mail or 3.5" floppy disks (see Attachments 1 and 2).

- (1) All competitive Requests for Proposals (RFPs)(MANDATORY¹)
- (2) All competitive Requests for Applications (RFAs) (MANDATORY²)
- (3) All Invitations for Bid (IFBs)(MANDATORY¹)
- (4) All Annual Program Statements (APSS)(MANDATORY²)
- (5) All competitive Requests for Quotes (RFQs)
- (6) All USPSC Solicitations (except Resident Hires)(MANDATORY)

(a) You will need to submit an affirmative statement in your transmittal e-mail to the OP Internet Coordinator that the form required by CIB 00-08 (and its supplement) has been completed.

(b) You will also need to follow the instructions in CIB 97-17 (as corrected) - or its successor regulation --- regarding required content of the USPSC solicitation.

- (7) **Bonafide Draft solicitations** (Bonafide means complete solicitation document with all sections - not merely a document which has been assigned a solicitation number)
- (8) **All Amendments to any of the above posted solicitation documents (MANDATORY)**
- (9) **All Procurement Information Bulletins (PIBs)(MANDATORY)**
- (10) **All Ocean Transportation Tenders (MANDATORY)**
- (11) **Host Country Contract Solicitations**

For items (1) through (6) above, you must submit the following in ONE electronic file via e-mail to the OPIC. (Exceptions must be discussed in advance with the OPIC):

(a) Solicitation Number (draft solicitations must also have a number).

(b) Cover letter; you must include the issuance and closing dates.

1 This mandatory requirement is qualified in accordance with AIDAR 706.302-70 to exclude overseas RFPs or IFBs for activities not in excess of \$250,000.

2 This mandatory requirement is qualified in accordance with ADS 303.5.4 which allows for limiting competition to indigenous or local organizations.

(c) All other required sections of the given solicitation type including those attachments that are available electronically.

Further, for USAID/W Contracting Officers and Negotiators: You must provide a signed hard copy of the solicitation document to the OPIC concurrent with the submittal of the electronic copy. If you are located overseas, you must supply the OPIC a copy of the SF33 either by faxing it to 202-216-3143 or providing an electronic copy in PDF or similar format. The SF33 copy or fax should be transmitted to the OPIC at the same time the e-mail, containing the solicitation document, is transmitted. The information contained on the SF33 will appear as part of the RFP/IFB file as a graphics file.

You should make every effort to provide any attachments to the solicitation in an electronic format. If you do not submit a given attachment electronically, it may be omitted from the Internet version of the solicitation. If you omit attachments to your electronic submission because they are not available electronically, provide the OPIC a detailed list of those documents.

We are unable to post solicitations that exceed 200 pages (including all attachments) except on an exceptional basis. If you find that your solicitation will exceed 200 pages, you will need to coordinate early with the OPIC who can suggest alternate arrangements for distribution of some of the lengthier attachments. In the past, linkages to mission or Bureau websites for voluminous information has been successful.

Forward the document to the OPIC as soon as it is fully prepared (this means as soon as the document would otherwise be ready to send for printing, but not yet issued).

The OPIC will not post an IFB or RFP until s/he receives the CBD Notice for it from the CBDNet publishing. (This occurs automatically; however it is mentioned here since there is generally a few days delay between your request to Delaina Vines for CBD posting and CBDNet notice to the OPIC that they have indeed published it. If you are posting an IFB or RFP for which the CBD pre-solicitation notice requirement has been waived, you must forward a copy of that waiver to the OPIC with the solicitation.

POST AWARD DOCUMENTS

(1) All CBD Award Notices (MANDATORY)

(2) (NEW!) Other Award Notices. For Award Notices other than CBD Notices, include as minimum: Award Number, Award Title, Solicitation Number, Award Date, Awardees Name, Awardees contact information, Award Amount, USAID Point of Contact.

GENERAL SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

(1) Point of Contact

The OPIC is the liaison between M/OP and M/IRM and may be reached as follows:

Address: Office of Procurement Internet Coordinator
M/OP/SPU, Room 7.8-85, RRB
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, D.C. 20523-2702

Phone: (202)-712-4442

Facsimile: (202)-216-3143

E-mail address: OP_Internet-Coordinator@OP.B@AIDW
or OPIC@usaid.gov

(2) Submittal times and Posting Duration

You must submit any document that you would like posted to the Internet site **at least 24 hours in advance** of your required issuance date. The documents will be posted as soon after receipt by the coordinator as possible, but not before the issuance date.

All IFB, RFP, RFA and APS solicitations will remain on the Internet until 30 days after the closing date for the receipt of proposals. Any corresponding pre-solicitation notice will also be removed at the same time. All CBD Award notices will be removed from the Internet 30 days after the posting date. USFSC solicitations are removed one day after the closing date for the receipt of proposals. We do not maintain records of these documents electronically or otherwise. Therefore, requests for documents that have been deleted from the Internet site will be directed to the appropriate Overseas Mission or USAID/W Office.

Other documents are deleted at the discretion of the OPIC in consultation with the Chief of the Procurement Support Division.

(3) Formatting

The Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) issued final standards for electronic and information technology covered by section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998. As such, USAID is revising its standards for web accessibility based on these federally mandated standards. This means that all A&A documents submitted for posting must comply with these new standards. Our Word documents are generally compliant except when it comes to forms. A detailed technical description of these standards can be found on the USAID Website at:
http://www.usaid.gov/info_technology/xweb/toolkit/federal_regs.html.

Non-technically speaking, the requirement is aimed at ensuring that all information on federal government websites can be read through assistive devices that may be used by the visually impaired. There are a number of acceptable formats (e.g. HTML, Word forms, etc). The types of formats that are unacceptable are those that provide an "image" or use Optical Character Recognition (OCR) to provide a "picture" of a form. This CIB does not mandate a particular format. You should check with your local Systems Administrator to ensure your documents are Section 508 compliant. If you need further assistance on this matter or have further questions, please contact the OPIC.

Questions relating to these procedures can be addressed to the OPIC at 202-712-4442 or via e-mail (see address above).

Attachments:

- What needs to be in the CBD Pre-Solicitation Notice?
- Format for Pre-Solicitation Notices Other than CBD Notices.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE IN THE CBD PRE-SOLICITATION NOTICE?

- When you identify a Point of Contact (POC) in the CBD, you need to include the complete e-mail address of that person.
- Include the following language in the body of the text under item "17".

"The preferred method of distribution of USAID Acquisition and Assistance (A&A) information is via the Internet. (By exception, USAID can provide the solicitation on a 3.5" floppy disk (Microsoft 97 format), via e-mail, or in hard copy.)

This CBD Notice can be viewed and downloaded using the Agency Web Site. The solicitation, once issued, can be downloaded from the Agency web site. You are encouraged to access the solicitation via the Internet as this eliminates possible delays associated with mailing, in general, and particularly from overseas Missions. The USAID Worldwide Web address is <http://www.usaid.gov>. Select "Business and Procurement" from the home page, then "USAID Procurements." On the following screen, select "Download Available USAID Solicitations". Here you will see a list of all new solicitations. You must confirm in writing to the contact person noted above that, you have received this solicitation through the Internet. As the recipient of this solicitation document, you are responsible for ensuring that you have received it from INTERNET in its entirety. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes. Further, be aware that amendments to solicitations are occasionally issued and will be posted on the same Internet site from which you downloaded the solicitation. Generally, the Contracting Officer will issue amendments to all those who have sent in the written confirmation of solicitation receipt. However, USAID does not guarantee that an amendment will be issued to you directly based upon written confirmation that you have downloaded the solicitation from the Internet. You are therefore advised to regularly check the USAID Internet site for amendments."

FORMAT FOR PRE-SOLICITATION NOTICES OTHER THAN CBD NOTICES

1. **TITLE:** *The information provided here is how the notice will be identified in the pre-solicitation notice listing. Country where work will take place should be identified here if different than the country in Item 1.*
2. **POINT(S) OF CONTACT:** *Provide name, e-mail address, phone number, fax number, office address. If possible, include an alternate point of contact as well*
3. **DATE OF NOTICE:** *Use format DD MMM YYYY (e.g. 02 FEB 2001)*
4. **PROPOSED SOLICITATION NUMBER :**
5. **ESTIMATED DATE OF AVAILABILITY OF SOLICITATION**
6. **ESTIMATED CLOSING DATE FOR RECIEPT OF APPLICATIONS**
7. **DESCRIPTION:** *Enter a clear and concise description of the action. The following language must also be included:*

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